

(iii) Withdraw the suspension based on identification and implementation of a satisfactory solution to the problem. Manufacturer suspensions may be withdrawn before the end of the 90-day period if the Postal Service determines that the manufacturer's solution and implementation are satisfactory.

(d) The manufacturer may present the Postal Service with a written defense to any suspension or revocation determination within 30 calendar days of receiving the written notice (unless a shorter period is deemed necessary). The defense must include all supporting evidence and state with specificity the reasons for which the order should not be imposed.

(e) After receipt and consideration of the defense, the Postal Service shall advise the manufacturer of the decision and the facts and reasons for it. The decision shall be effective on receipt unless it provides otherwise. The decision shall also advise the manufacturer that it may appeal that determination within 30 calendar days of receiving written notice (unless a shorter time frame is deemed necessary), as specified therein. The appeal must include all supporting evidence and state with specificity the reasons the manufacturer believes that the decision is erroneous.

(f) An order or final decision under this section does not preclude any other criminal or civil statutory, common law, or administrative remedy that is available by law to the Postal Service, the United States, or any other person or concern.

§ 501.6 Specifications.

Postage meters must incorporate all the following features and safeguards:

(a) A postage meter is the postage printing die and postage registering mechanism of a mailing machine. It may be integral with the mailing machine or separable. In either case, the licensee must be able to take the meter to the post office for setting or examination.

(b) A meter may be capable of printing one denomination of postage and registering the number of such impressions made (single denomination), or it may be capable of printing varying denominations and registering either

multiples of the smallest unit printed (multidenomination) or the currency value of the impressions made (omnidenomination). The printing die or dies, counters, and counteractuating mechanism must be inseparable from the meter, except by the manufacturer.

(c) In each meter, there must be two accurate and dependable counting devices: one ascending and registering the total imprinted, the other descending and registering the unused postage balance. The descending register must actuate a locking mechanism that prevents further operation of the meter after the register descends to zero or an amount less than the largest denomination printable in one operation. In electronic meters, the locking device must prevent printing if the amount to be printed reduces the descending register to less than zero. The construction of the descending register must allow the post office to set any amount of postage or number of impressions within its capacity, prepaid by the licensee.

(d) The entire meter must be encased in a substantial housing to which unauthorized access cannot be gained without creating obvious damage. The descending register must be accessible to the post office by a door equipped with a suitable lock and with provision for a post office seal. The requirement that accessibility to the descending register be restricted does not apply to Computerized Remote Postage Meter Resetting System electronic meters that have no access to the descending register of the meter. Descending registers on this type of meter are reset electronically by coded input only. The ascending register and all other components must be so shielded as not to be accessible even when the door is open. The readings of both registers must be easily obtainable at any time between operations, by visibility through closed windows, by imprint on tape or card, or by a combination of the two methods. The construction of the housing must make it impossible to alter the readings of the ascending register except by normal operation or impossible to gain access to the internal components, except for setting the descending register under § 501.20(c), without mutilation.

(e) The printing die must either conform in design to one already in use or be approved by the Postal Service. The die must include the serial number of the meter and identification of the manufacturer, and the die must be so constructed or shielded that it is not practically possible without proper registration in the ascending and descending register to obtain imprints fraudulently. The die must be attached to the meter in a manner (such as with breakoff screws) that it is not practicable to remove or replace the die fraudulently.

(f) The meter die must include a postmark to print the name of the city and state from which mail is dispatched and the date of mailing, except as specified by the Postal Service. Information that must appear in the meter postmark and the location of that postmark must be as specified by the Postal Service.

(g) A meter may be designed to print a meter slogan or ad plate to the left of, and next to, the postmark. The size and position of a meter slogan or ad plate must not interfere with or obscure the meter stamp or postmark, and it must be possible to install the plate easily without exposing the meter stamp die. Plates must be made of suitable, durable material that does not soften or disintegrate while in use. Plates must be well-fitted and so securely fastened to the printing mechanism that they do not become loose or detached or otherwise interfere with proper operation of a meter.

(h) The entire meter must be of sufficiently solid, substantial, and dependable construction that protects the Postal Service amply against loss of revenue from fraud, manipulation, misoperation, or breakdown.

(i) In addition to the features and safeguards above, electronic meters must:

(1) Have either nonvolatile ascending and descending registers or a solid-state memory that stores the data for the ascending and descending registers. Solid-state memories that rely on applied voltage for memory retention must be powered by batteries with a minimum support life of 5 years from the date of battery renewal with no ex-

ternal power applied and with sufficient redundancy to be self-checking.

(2) Be able to display the amounts in both the ascending and the descending registers (not necessarily at the same time).

(3) Be able to display, free from accidental changes, the next amount of postage to be printed.

(4) Be resettable by Postal Service employees, preferably without customized equipment.

(5) Contain a fault-detection device for computational security that automatically locks out the meter and prevents printing of additional postage in the event of malfunction.

(6) Meet Postal Service test specifications in United States Postal Service Specification, Postage Meters, Electronic, Postal Service-M-942 (RDC). Persons wanting to manufacture electronic meters may obtain a copy of this Postal Service test specification from Postal Service Headquarters.

(j) Auxiliary equipment required for the operation of the meters must be part of the final production models submitted for Postal Service approval. Failure of the auxiliary equipment, which could cause malfunction in meter operation, is considered the same as a meter failure.

§ 501.7 Test plans.

To receive Postal Service approval, a postage meter must be tested. Manufacturers of electronic meters must submit a detailed test plan to the Postal Service for approval at least 60 days before conducting the tests. The test plan must include tests that, if passed by a meter, prove compliance by the meter with all postal requirements. The test plan must list the parameters to be tested, test equipment, procedures, test sample sizes, and test data formats. Also, the plan must include detailed descriptions, specifications, design drawings, schematic diagrams, and explanations of the purposes of all special test equipment and non-standard or noncommercial instrumentation.